



Kentucky Extension
Master Gardener
Fayette County

NEWSLETTER

FAYETTE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER'S ASSOCIATION



The Prez Sez...

BY ANN HENRY

Dear Master Gardeners,

There is a lot going on right now. Gardens are in and flowers are blooming. At our condo there isn't any real room for planting so I have a patio with pots of herbs and one broccoli plant, one pepper and one small tomato plant. It isn't much but Farmer's Market is always a place where I can get fresh vegetables.

The Board has completed writing the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation for the Fayette County Master Gardeners Association. Active FCGMA members will be getting Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws by email for review and information on next steps.

The Continuing Education Committee is working hard and has planned some great learning experiences. Check out the list on page 4 to Watch for ways you can complete getting your CEU's.

Please have a great summer. Happy Gardening,
Ann



Newsletter Committee:

- SUSAN MILLER, CHAIR
- MARY MILLER, CO-CHAIR
- SHARON BENNETT
- JUDI DANIELS
- PAMELA DORREL
- AUGUSTA HOSMER
- SUSAN MCDANIEL

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**A lawn is nature under
totalitarian rule.**

Michael Pollan

THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

- Bluegrass Flower and Vegetable Show - June 10 - 11
- Gardener's Toolbox Class - Native Ornamental Grasses - June 15
- National Pollinator Week Kickoff - June 17
- Gardener's Toolbox Class - Milkweed - June 20
- Lexington Council of Garden Clubs Garden Tours - June 24 - 25
- Gardener's Toolbox Class - Garden Phlox - June 29

Johnny's Selected Seeds has a technical sheet with more detailed kalette instructions. The PDF can be found at <https://www.johnnyseeds.com/vegetables/kalettes/>



Kalettes: When Brussels Sprouts and Kale Unite

BY PAMELA DORREL

Master Gardener Mary Cowles loves Brussels sprouts, but they don't grow as well as the other vegetables in her garden. She heard about kalettes, the newest vegetable hybrid that has been quickly growing in popularity. She decided to try them last year and she had such good success and loved their **"brussely", nutty, sweet flavor** so much that she's growing them again this year.

They were first developed by **Tozer Seeds in England in 2010**. Tozer crossed Brussels sprouts with kale to form a hybrid that they called Flower Sprouts (*Brassica oleracea*). The plants grow up to three feet tall, much like Brussels sprouts, but the stalks are covered with loosely formed dark green flower-like rosettes with purple-tinged edges.

Tozer continued to develop them and in 2014, introduced them in the United States with the new name "Kalettes." As of 2023, there are three varieties based on when they're planted and harvested. They are early season "Autumn Star", mid-season "Mistletoe", and late season "Snowdrop".

Mary purchased her seeds from **Johnny's Selected Seeds**, the only authorized seller in the U.S. In mid-March she started the seeds in plugs made from a mix of sphagnum peat moss and vermiculite.

She put the flats on a wire shelf in her basement where the temperature is always about 65 degrees. It's set up with shop lights on a timer, so the seeds get about 16 hours of light per day. In late April she hardened off the new plants and she began **transplanting them in early May**. She gifted six of her plants to the Extension vegetable garden and we planted them May 5th in one of the raised beds at the back of the garden.

Kalettes are **grown and harvested like Brussels sprouts but they take longer to mature and they have a longer growing season**. They reach maturity anywhere from 110 to 138 days depending on which cultivar is planted. According to Mary, our plants should mature in August and they'll continue to produce florets possibly as late as December.

Kalettes mature from the bottom up. The florets are **harvested once they reach about two inches in diameter**. They can be stored in the vegetable drawer of the refrigerator the same way as other greens. We won't get to try our harvest because it will all be donated, but kalettes can be eaten raw, steamed, sautéed or any other way that kale or Brussels sprouts can be enjoyed.

We'll get to observe the kalette's progress in the garden. **Come to the garden this summer and check them out!**



Photo Credit: Tozer Seeds

Big Tools for Really Big Jobs

BY SHARON BENNETT

After the prolonged Arctic freeze in December you may be facing some heavy jobs in your landscape—particularly if you need to remove large shrubs and woody perennials.

I recently had to remove and replace some very large rhododendrons that were 20-35 years old. Here are some of the heavy duty tools I used that made such a big job more manageable. Using these tools I was able to cut back, dig through roots and pry out a half dozen shrubs ranging from 6 to 9 foot tall in a little over an hour.

TRIMMING

Before digging, you'll want to get the dead branches out of your way. **Gear driven loppers** make easy work of cutting through woody branches. This pair can readily cut through branches up to 1.25" in diameter. Larger loppers can handle even thicker branches. The gear drive provides lots of cutting power without straining your hands.

GEAR-DRIVEN LOPPERS



DIGGING

Here are two types of spades that handily slice through the roots anchoring shrubs. **Root Slayer** brand has a series of blades all facing the same direction which are specially designed to cut on the down stroke. Weighing in at about 6 pounds, Root Slayer has a broad foot rest and safely makes short work of cutting around a large shrub.

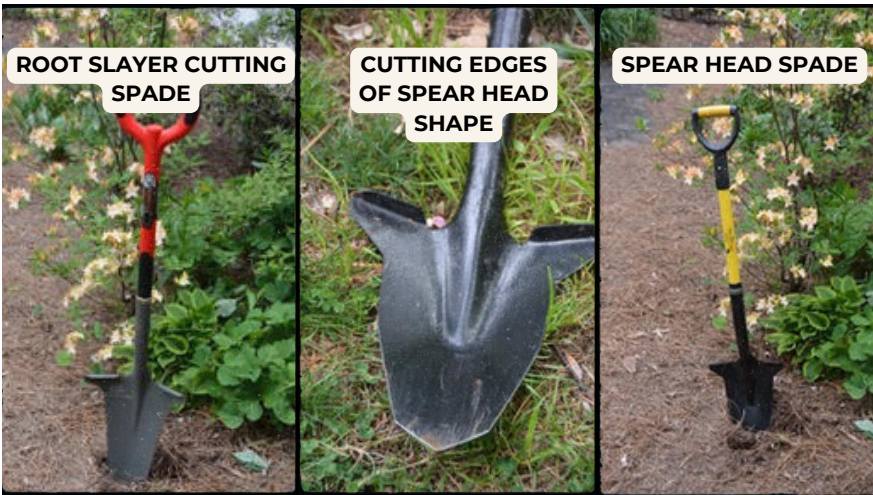
Spearhead spades are designed for digging in rocky, heavy, compacted, and/or root-filled soils. This spade weighs about 4 pounds and is thicker and sturdier than a regular shovel. The carbon steel blade has beveled edges from tip to tail. The spade has a large forward bent foot rest for comfort and safety and lets you really apply some downward force.

A side note—both of these types of spades are also great for digging holes to plant!

ROOT SLAYER CUTTING SPADE

CUTTING EDGES OF SPEAR HEAD SHAPE

SPEAR HEAD SPADE



REMOVAL

A heavy duty spading fork provides excellent leverage to pry the root ball out. The **Bully Fork** which weighs 10 pounds is forged from steel and also has a big step plate. This extra heavy duty fork is exceptionally sturdy and will not bend, even when you apply all your body weight to the fiberglass handle—I was able to stand on the handle while prying without damaging the tines.

PROTECT YOUR HANDS

Finally, you will want some very sturdy gardening gloves for the job. I like these durable, comfortable leather **gloves** which were designed by a hand surgeon to provide extra support for gardening. They are tough, long-lasting and really do keep my hands from aching while gardening and protected from cuts, scrapes and blisters.

BULLY FORK



BIONIC GLOVES



So, there you have my line up of indispensable tools for very heavy jobs. Good luck and happy digging!

CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

The Continuing Education Committee has planned some exciting opportunities to earn continuing education credits. Look for emails announcing each event, or sign up using the provided contact information for each event below. Look for additional offerings announced by email.

LOCAL EVENTS/PROGRAMS (within Fayette County)



National Pollinator Week Kick-Off Event at McConnell Springs Park,
June 17, 2:00 to 4:00 PM (2 hours credit)
RSVP to Judy Worth: jkworth@cloud.com
For additional information, go to <https://www.pollinatorlex.com>

Lexington Council of Garden Clubs, Open Gates to Bluegrass Living Garden Tour,
Saturday June 24 from 10-5 and Sunday June 25 from 1-5. For more information go to :
<https://www.lexgardenclubs.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2023-Tour-Flyer-Poster-Final.pdf>
Fee: \$20 (2 hours credit) RSVP by June 21 to Judy Worth at jkworth@cloud.com



Greenhouse 17 Tour
June 30 10:00 AM-12:00 PM (2 hours credit)
Free: preregistration required,
RSVP by June 28 to Marilyn Gall: lyngall25@gmail.com

FIELD TRIPS and Other Opportunities (outside Fayette County)

Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden Plant Trials Symposium

August 24. Registration fee \$129 (6 Hours credit)
For more information, see https://cincinnati-zoo.org/horticulture/horticulture_events/
RSVP by August 21 to Judy Worth: jkworth@cloud.com

Removal of Invasive Plants and Planting for Pollinators

September 23, Canewood Farm, Jessamine County 1:00-4:00 PM
Presented by Dr. Tammy Horn Potter, State Apiarist and Cathy Anderson (2 hours credit)
RSVP by September 19 to Susan Daole at: Daole@uky.edu

Customized Tour: Garden Design for Everyone: Native and Woody Plants

Oct. 21 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM <https://bernheim.org/program-and-events/> Bernheim Forest, Bullitt & Nelson Counties with optional lunch at Jim Beam Distillery restaurant
Tour fees to be announced later (1.5 hours credit) RSVP by October 7 to Doris Settles: at dorissettles@gmail.com

Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden Native Plant Symposium

November 18, for more information go to https://cincinnati-zoo.org/horticulture/horticulture_events/
Registration fee (In person) \$129 (6 hours credit) RSVP by November 15 to Judy Worth: jkworth@cloud.com

State Master Gardener Conference, (6 hours credit) Sept 12-13

Frankfort, KSU Farm. Registration information will be sent to Extension Master Gardeners as soon as this information becomes available.

International Master Gardener Conference (10 hours credit)

June 18-23 Overland Park, Kansas. Registration fee \$459 RSVP by June 11 Graham Rowles: growl2@uky.edu For additional information, go to <https://imgc2023.com>

Commissioned Lectures

Continuing Education will also be arranging guest visits or guest lectures in person or zoom followed by discussion presented by eminent conservationists, arborists or horticulturalists.

Join us for Education of a Gardener. lecture presented live on Zoom by Janet Draper, Smithsonian Gardens Horticulturist. on November 4 from 1-3 at Eastside Public Library. 1:00-3:00p.m (2 hours credit) RSVP by November 1 to Susan Daole: Daole@uky.edu



Iris Tour at Blueberry Hill Iris Garden



On May 15 Graham Rowles hosted the program "Growing Irises: Basic Issues and New Opportunities" at Blueberry Hill Iris Garden, Graham's home in Georgetown. The program included Mary Lynne Lange (President of Bluegrass Iris Society, BGIS) and other members of the BGIS and was offered for continuing education credit.



Bluegrass Flower and Vegetable Show

We hope everyone is planning to enter something pretty at the flower show on Saturday, June 10 at Masterson Station Park on Leestown Road. It can be a single flower snipped from your backyard, a full-fledged floral arrangement, a basket of greens from your garden - and everything in between. Entries will be accepted from 9 to 11:30 am and judging will be at 1 pm. For more information and tips for entering go to bluegrassflowershow.com

If you are planning on entering the Design Class, here are the categories:

Division II Design Classes

Theme: Enchantment Disney Princesses

Class 108 Cinderella-novices only, have not received a blue ribbon previously

109 Tangled- traditional design

110 Frozen- creative design

111 Mulan- design in oriental manner

112 Moana- petite design between 7 and 12 inches in height, width, depth



How to Add Asparagus to Your Home Garden by Augusta Hosmer

Asparagus (*Asparagus officinalis*) is one of the most nutrient-rich, versatile vegetables on the planet, and it's a great example of a plant with easy care but high reward. If you're scratching your head at an empty space in your vegetable garden (does anyone actually deal with that and not the opposite problem?), here's how to make asparagus work for you.

Varieties/choosing your plants: There are several popular varieties, such as the older cultivar 'Martha Washington' and the Jersey line. The extension office demo garden also currently grows 'Purple Passion' and 'Millennium' with great success. Look for all male varieties, if possible, because that will give you higher yields.

The edible spears are actually shoots that will turn into leafy plants similar to ferns when you stop harvesting.

Life Cycle: Asparagus is a perennial in the lily family. It has a reputation of taking a long time to establish, which causes some folks to shy away from it. Though it takes until around the third growing season to see the harvest you want, it's easy and worth the wait since it can produce for several decades. Or, you can transplant older crowns (1-3 years old). Don't harvest the first year of the plant's life, and limit harvest during the second year.

Planting Guidelines: Plant 6-8 inches deep, 15-18 inches apart in well-draining soil. Asparagus tends to prefer less acidic soil.

Disease/pests: Asparagus isn't pressured a lot by these, but can fall to fungi like rust, purple spot, and crown rot or to insects like asparagus beetles and aphids.

Harvesting: Break the spears off at soil level, usually at ~6-8 inches.

EXTENSION GARDEN ASPARAGUS



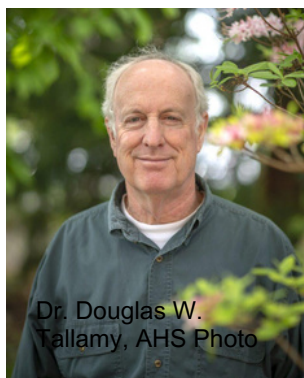
From first emergence to one week's growth to final harvest

Free Webinars from the American Horticultural Society By Pamela Dorrel

The American Horticultural Society has restarted its Conversations with Great American Gardeners program for 2023. The webinar series highlights past and current winners of the Great American Gardeners awards who are considered champions of horticulture, the best in American gardening.

Each conversation is hosted by Holly Shimizu, an AHS board member and former director of the U.S. Botanic Garden. Viewers have a chance to ask questions during the hour-long conversation.

In May, the first webinar in the series featured Dr. Doug Tallamy. He is Professor of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at University of Delaware where he has taught insect related courses for over 40 years and written over 100 research papers. He's the author of *The Living Landscape*, *Bringing Nature Home*, *Nature's Best Hope* (a New York Times bestseller), and *The Nature of Oaks*. He's also co-founder of Homegrown National Park.



The first question asked was how he sees the role of ecology and gardening blended together. Doug explained that one of the primary roles of plants on this planet is that they generate all the food. They capture energy from the sun and use photosynthesis to turn it into simple sugars; food that all the animals on the planet directly or indirectly depend upon. But, if you don't get the food to the animals then you don't have any animals, and if you don't have any animals then you don't have a functioning ecosystem, and if you don't have a functioning ecosystem then you don't have any humans.

He said that as gardeners, we are extremely powerful because we're able to manipulate the first trophic level of our ecosystem. This is the level of plants, because plants are producers, also known as autotrophs, that make their own food and don't depend on other organisms for nutrition. Gardeners can control how well their ecosystems work by what they plant or don't plant. The challenge of today for gardeners is to plant landscapes, not gardens, that are not only beautiful to look at but also ecologically diverse and functional. This requires a combination of design skills, horticultural knowledge and a thorough understanding of ecology.

He also talked about his efforts with Homegrown National Park, which is a grassroots organization that seeks to regenerate biodiversity in this country and around the planet. He again stressed that every living thing on this planet needs a diverse and highly productive ecosystem to survive. Individual homeowners and property owners or anyone who has some soil to plant in can start a new HABITAT® by removing invasive plants and planting native plants. It takes a small effort by many people across the globe, but that combined effort will create larger populations of plants and animals that will create more ecologically functional networks around the world. More information about Doug Tallamy and his work can be found at <https://humansandnature.org/doug-tallamy/>

The live webinars are free to all, but registration must be done in advance. Additional dates and speakers in the series are:

Ira Wallace, Wednesday, June 14, 7:00 p.m.

Ira Wallace is founder and owner of Southern Exposure Seed Exchange (). She's the author of *The Timber Press Guide to Vegetable Gardening in the Southeast*, *Grow Great Vegetables in Virginia*, and *Grow Great Vegetables in North Carolina*. She's also co-founder of the annual Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia..

Lucinda McDade, Wednesday, August 23, 7:00 p.m.

Dr. Lucinda McDade is Executive Director and Director of Research at California Botanic Garden, Chair of the Botany Department at Claremont Graduate University, and Board member at the Center for Plant Conservation.

To register, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/4n452d37>